

Indiana House of Representatives

News and Information

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PIERCE PLAN TO AID GUARD AND RESERVES ADVANCES TO GOVERNOR

INDIANAPOLIS – Gov. Mitch Daniels is set to consider legislation that includes a proposal authored by State Rep. Matt Pierce (D-Bloomington) that will protect student financial aid for Indiana National Guard members and military reservists.

Senate Enrolled Act 304, which has been approved by both the Indiana House and Senate, contains language championed by Pierce that will enable the State Student Assistance Commission of Indiana (SSACI) not to count active duty pay earned by Guard and Reserve members when calculating their student financial aid.

If signed into law by the governor, the change will impact Guard members and other reservists who are returning to school after an involuntary deployment.

Pierce chose to pursue the proposal after being contacted by an Indiana University student.

"This student's financial aid was significantly reduced when he returned from an involuntary deployment because his increased military pay was included in the financial aid calculation," Pierce said. "SSACI officials ruled that state law required them to count the income.

"It just didn't seem right to me that someone whose education was interrupted because he was called to serve our country should have to lose financial aid because of that service," he continued. "The language I have inserted in SEA 304 gives SSACI the flexibility needed to make sure that people are not inadvertently punished when they are involuntarily deployed."

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This news release can be accessed on the Internet at www.IN.gov/H61